

Maximin—it was appointed to be used as a text-book in schools throughout Asia and Egypt. There was no more subtle method of training bigots and poisoning the minds of the younger generation amongst Christianity. Some of the Emperor's devices, however, were much more crude. For example, the military commandant of Damascus arrested half a dozen notorious women of the town and threatened them with torture if they did not confess that they were Christians, and that they had been present at ceremonies of the grossest impurity in the Christian assemblies. Maximin ordered the precious confession thus extorted to be set up in a prominent place in every township.

But the Emperor was not merely a furious bigot. There is evidence that he fully recognised the wonderful strength of the Christian ecclesiastical organisation and contrasted it with the essential weakness of the pagan system. In this he anticipated the Emperor Julian. Paganism was anything but a church. Its framework was loose and disconnected. There were various colleges of priests, some of which were powerful and had branches throughout the Empire, but there was little connection between them save that of a common ritual. There was also little doctrine save in the special mysteries, where membership was preceded by formal initiation. Maximin sought to institute a pagan clergy based upon the Christian model, with a definite hierarchy from the highest to the lowest. ?> There were already chief priests of the various provinces, who had borne for long the titles of Asiarch, Pontarch, Galatarch,